REMARKS

STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-13 have been pending.

Claims 1-3, 6-8, and 11-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Yoshiura et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,131,162 (hereinafter "Yoshiura"), in view of Hirai, U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/00833324 (hereinafter "Hirai").

Claims 4, 5, 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Yoshiura, in view of Hirai, in further view of Stach et al, U.S. Patent No. 7,068,809 (hereinafter "Stach").

In accordance with the foregoing, the claim are amended, and, thus, the pending claims remain for reconsideration, which is respectfully requested.

No new matter has been added.

The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed.

INTERVIEW REQUEST:

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned to schedule an interview at the convenience of the Examiner.

CLAIM REJECTIONS:

Independent claims 1, 7, 12 and 13 are allegedly unpatentable over Yoshiura, in view of Hirai.

In accordance with the foregoing, claim 1 is amended to recite, in part, "a first apparatus which enters, from an image on a medium, image data with embedded stegano data that cannot be recognized visually, the first apparatus sending the entered image data to the outside with destination information and receiving a result of processing from the outside and holding the same, said first apparatus having a low processing capability for processing stegano data." Support for the claim amendment can be found, for example, at page 10, lines 12-25 of the specification.

The Office Action asserts that Yoshiura discloses the same. Applicants respectfully disagree, because Yoshiura, at column 6, lines 9-19 recites:

> To achieve the above objects, a method according to this invention is an embed-in-content information processing method for

> processing information embedded in a content using an electronic computer. The method includes the steps of creating cryptographic information **by encrypting specific data using a private key in accordance with a public key** cipher system used by content-handling persons; **and embedding the created cryptographic information into the content** such that the cryptographic information cannot be separated from the content without using a predetermined rule.

(emphasis added).

In other words, Yoshiura discusses a method of embedding cryptographic information into content, but is silent on managing retrieval of embedded stegano data.

Furthermore, Yoshiura, in discussing the sixth embodiment at column 29, lines 17-27, recites:

> That is, the server 1122 calculates the hash value 2306 of the Web page data 2305 sent with the mark-send request (step 2301) **and embeds, as a digital signature, the calculated hash value 2306 into the mark 2307 stored in the mark management DB 1123** (step 2302). The server 1122 then modifies Web page data 2305 sent with the mark-send request so that a mark 2308 into which the digital watermark was embedded is displayed in the Web page (step 2303), and sends the modified Web page data 2309 to the mark acquisition program running on the vendor terminal 1112 (step 2304).

(emphasis added).

In other words, Yoshiura discusses embedding a digital signiture onto a mark on a web page. Furthermore, Yoshiura at column 32, lines 1-10 recites:

> In the sixth to eighth embodiments described above, the mark management server modifies the Web page data, sent with a mark-send request, so that the mark in which a digital watermark is embedded may be displayed in the Web page. The server then sends the modified Web page data to the mark acquisition program running on the vendor terminal. This processing may be modified as follows.
>
> That is, **the mark management server sends a mark, in which a digital watermark is embedded, to the vendor terminal**. The vendor terminal modifies the original of the Web page data sent with the mark-send request so that the mark in which the digital watermark is embedded is displayed in the Web page.

(emphasis added).

In other words, Yoshiura discusses a server embedding a watermark and sending it to a terminal, but is silent on retrieving stegano data among two apparatuses.

In contrast, claim 1 recites, in part, "a first apparatus which enters, from an image on a medium, image data with embedded stegano data that cannot be recognized visually." That is, the claimed first apparatus acquires image data of an image already embedded with stegano data. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Yoshiura fails to disclose, either expressly or implicitly, the claimed "a first apparatus which enters, from an image on a medium, image data with embedded stegano data that cannot be recognized visually," because Yoshiura discusses embedding a watermark in a mark.

The Office Action, at pages 3-4 acknowledge that Yoshiura is silent regarding the claimed "second apparatus which receives said image data and destination information from said first apparatus, effects data processing on the image data received from the first apparatus to acquire stegano data, the second apparatus sending the acquired stegano data as a result of processing to the first apparatus," as recited, for example, in amended claim 1. The Office Action asserts that Hirai, at paragraphs 56, 61, 87 and 89, discloses the same.

Applicants respectfully disagree because Hirai, at paragraph 61 recites:

> According to a further aspect of the present invention, there is provided a storage medium for physically storing a computer-readable software program which executes processing concerning embedding of a digital watermark into a content on a computer system. The computer-readable software program includes **embedding the digital watermark into the content and removing the digital watermark from the content**. The embedding step includes generating the digital watermark; embedding the digital watermark into the content; transmitting the content provided with the embedded digital watermark; and transmitting the digital watermark or information for reconstructing the digital watermark. The removing step includes acquiring the content provided with the embedded digital watermark; acquiring the digital watermark or the information for reconstructing the digital watermark; and **removing the digital watermark from the content by using the acquired digital watermark or the acquired information for reconstructing the digital watermark**.

(emphasis added)

In other words, Hirai discusses embedding content with a digital watermark and then removing the digital water mark, but not among two apparatuses.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that a *prima facie* case of obviousness cannot be based upon Yoshiura and Hirai, because Yoshiura and Hirai merely discusses conventional methods of embedded encrypted data, watermarking and removal of watermarking, and, thus, there is no evidence that one skilled in the art would modify Yoshiura, Hirai or a combination of

Yoshiura and Hirai to include the claimed "first apparatus which enters, from an image on a medium, image data with embedded stegano data that cannot be recognized visually, the first apparatus sending the entered image data to the outside with destination information and receiving a result of processing from the outside and holding the same, said first apparatus having a low processing capability for processing stegano data; and a second apparatus which receives said image data and destination information from said first apparatus, effects data processing on the image data received from the first apparatus to acquire stegano data, the second apparatus sending the acquired stegano data as a result of processing to the first apparatus in accordance with said destination information, said second apparatus having a high processing capability for processing stegano data," as recited in amended claim 1, and seen a benefit of retrieving stegano data from an image on a medium.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the cited references.

Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 7, 12 and 13 patentably distinguish over the cited references for similar reasons as independent claim 1.

Dependent claims are patentably distinguishing at least due to their dependence from the independent claims and/or recite patentably distinguishing features of their own. Withdrawal of the rejection of the pending claims and allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIM:

New claim 14 is directed to a method, including:

> transmitting, from a portable electronic device, image data of an image embedded with stegano data to a server; and
>
> receiving, from the server, the embedded stegano data.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit the claims 14 patentably distinguishes over the cited references, because Yoshiura and Hirai do not divide stegano data processing between a device and a server. Support for claim 14 can be found, for example, in the specification at page 10, line 7 to page 11, line 22.

CONCLUSION

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 31, 2007

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